

Between Words and Wisdom: Exploring Explicit and Implicit Meanings in the *Ulumul Qur'an*

¹Elisa Rahmah*, ²Muhammad Shohib

^{1,2} Universitas Kiai Abdullah Faqih, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: elisarahmah1610@gmail.com

Article Info :	ABSTRACT
Accepted: 08-01-2026 Approved: 06-03-2026 Published: 25-07-2026	<p>Background: The Qur'an, as the primary source of Islamic teachings, contains both explicit (<i>manṭūq</i>) and implicit (<i>mafhūm</i>) meanings. An imbalance in understanding these two dimensions often leads to rigid textualism or speculative interpretation, posing significant challenges in contemporary Qur'anic hermeneutics.</p> <p>Objective: This article aims to analyze the typological structures of <i>manṭūq</i> and <i>mafhūm</i> within the <i>Ulumul Qur'an</i> tradition, explain the relationship between <i>lafaz</i> (wording) and <i>hikmah</i> (wisdom) from the perspective of explicit and implicit meaning and examine the implications of this integrative understanding for Islamic education, character formation, social life, and spiritual development.</p> <p>Method: This study employs a qualitative library research design with a descriptive-analytical approach, utilizing thematic-conceptual analysis of classical and contemporary <i>Ulumul Qur'an</i> literature and tafsir works.</p> <p>Results: Explicit meaning (<i>manṭūq</i>) functions as a normative basis and methodological boundary for interpretation, while implicit meaning (<i>mafhūm</i>) represents the wisdom and substantive purpose of the Qur'an. Their integration yields an authentic and contextual understanding.</p> <p>Findings and Implications: This integrative hermeneutical framework supports holistic Islamic education, value-based character formation, socially just communities, and deeper spiritual life. The novelty of this study lies in its systematic linkage of the <i>manṭūq-mafhūm</i> dichotomy with the <i>lafaz-hikmah</i> relationship as a unified methodological principle for authentic and contextual Qur'anic interpretation.</p> <p>Conclusion: The study concludes that integrating the <i>manṭūq-mafhūm</i> framework with the relationship between <i>lafaz</i> and <i>hikmah</i> provides a comprehensive hermeneutical principle that bridges textual authenticity and contextual relevance.</p>
Keywords: <i>manthuq</i> ; <i>mafhum</i> ; quranic hermeneutics; <i>lafaz and</i> <i>hikmah</i> ; islamic education; <i>ulumul qur'an</i> .	

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>



INTRODUCTION

In Quranic studies, the concepts of *manthuq* and *mafhum* are essential foundations for understanding religious texts, particularly the Quran and Hadith (An Nury et al., 2024a; Faradina et al., 2024; Fikria & Zulhidah, 2023;

Mappasessu & Akmal, 2025). Manthuq refers to the meaning explicitly or directly stated in the text, while mafhum is the meaning implicitly or implied by the context. These two concepts not only aid in the interpretation of Islamic law but also enrich our understanding of the language and logic of religious teachings. This article will thoroughly explore the meaning of manthuq and mafhum, from basic definitions and types to examples of their application in the verses of the Quran and Hadith. By understanding the differences and relationships between the two, readers are expected to be able to analyze sacred texts more critically and deeply, thereby avoiding the misunderstandings that often arise in religious discussions.

The epistemological study of Qur'anic interpretation has long been a central concern in Islamic scholarship. Supena, (2024) demonstrates that tafsīr, ta'wīl, and hermeneutics represent three complementary epistemological models for understanding the Qur'anic text, each with distinct strengths: tafsīr grounds meaning in linguistic objectivity (dalālah luġawiyah), ta'wīl opens the deeper rational and intuitive dimensions, and hermeneutics connects both with the contemporary reader's context. The integration of these three approaches constitutes a paradigm shift in Qur'anic studies and directly supports the manthuq-mafhum framework employed in this article. Similarly, (Faris, 2023) affirms that the historical development of Qur'anic scholarship has continuously evolved from classical exegesis toward more integrative methodologies that maintain textual fidelity while responding to contemporary challenges.

Let us begin this exploration to strengthen our intellectual foundation in the Islamic world. From a social perspective, the misinterpretation of Qur'anic texts remains a pressing contemporary challenge. Rigid textualism the selective reading of explicit meanings divorced from their contextual wisdom — and interpretive excess the inflation of implicit meanings beyond their textual grounding both represent methodological failures that have contributed to ideological polarization within Muslim communities. This phenomenon underscores the urgent need for a hermeneutically balanced approach to Qur'anic understanding. The study of *Ulumul Qur'an*, particularly the concepts of manthuq and mafhum, provides the methodological tools necessary to navigate this challenge.

The tension between literalist and contextualist reading of the Qur'an has important pedagogical and social consequences. The phenomenon of rigid textualism, whereby the literal meaning of the text is privileged over other forms of meaning in the process of interpretation, has been identified as a root cause of intellectual stagnation and social conflict within Muslim communities. These findings directly affirm the contemporary urgency of the manthuq-

mafhum framework that this article seeks to develop. Previous studies have contributed significantly to the conceptual mapping of manthuq and mafhum. An Nury et al., (2024) analyzed the typology of manthuq and mafhum within explicit and implicit meaning frameworks, while Rasyid & Reskiani, (2023) examined their application in Qur'anic discourse. None has systematically integrated them with the lafaz-hikmah (wording-wisdom) relationship as a unified hermeneutical framework, nor has any prior study examined their combined implications across Islamic education, moral formation, social life, and spirituality in a single analytical work.

An Nury et al., (2024); Rasyid & Reskiani, (2023) Recent scholarly contributions have deepened the theoretical grounding of manthuq and mafhum as a hermeneutical framework. Nugroho & Alwizar, (2024) demonstrate that the kaidah mantuq-mafhum constitutes a fundamental principle in Qur'anic tafsir, establishing how explicit pronouncements (Mantuq) function as normative anchors while implicit meanings (Mafhum) extend the scope of legal and ethical understanding to cases not explicitly addressed in the text. This typological clarity is essential for preventing both hyper-literalism and unanchored interpretation. Complementing this, Saeed & Akbar, (2021) argue that a contextualist approach to Qur'anic interpretation enables Muslims to follow its ethical teachings in accordance with contemporary needs and circumstances, without sacrificing fundamental Qur'anic values—an insight that directly affirms the relevance of the mafhum dimension in navigating between textual fidelity and contextual responsiveness.

A closer review of existing scholarship reveals several related but partial contributions. Sulaeman (2022) extends this by applying dilalah manthuq and mafhum specifically to the interpretation of ahkam (legal) verses, demonstrating their hermeneutical utility in Islamic jurisprudence, yet without addressing the lafaz-hikmah dimension. Amir et al., (2023) offer a comprehensive account of the concept, history, and methodology of scientific Qur'anic studies (Tafsir 'Ilmi), contextualizing contemporary Qur'anic scholarship within the broader tradition of *Ulumul Qur'an*. Collectively, these studies affirm the scholarly importance of manthuq and mafhum but confirm the gap that this article addresses: the absence of a systematic integrative framework linking these categories with the lafaz-hikmah relationship and its implications across multiple domains of Muslim life.

Amir et al., (2023) Two recent empirical studies illuminate further dimensions of the manthuq-mafhum framework. Their findings highlight that these categories are not merely taxonomic but operate as active hermeneutical tools in contemporary ijihad. In a comparative theoretical perspective, AK

Khitam, (2024) identify a structural parallel between the manthuq-mafhum framework in *usul al-fiqh* and the three hermeneutical functions proposed by Gracia—historical, meaning-producing, and implicative—thereby situating the classical Islamic hermeneutical tradition within a broader global conversation on textual interpretation. This comparative insight confirms that the manthuq-mafhum framework is not only internally rigorous but also epistemologically commensurable with recognized theories of hermeneutics.

This article aims to: (1) analyze the concepts of mantuq and mafhum and their typological structures within the *Ulumul Qur'an* tradition; (2) explain the relationship between lafaz (wording) and hikmah (wisdom) from the perspective of explicit and implicit meaning; and (3) examine the implications of this integrative understanding for Islamic education, character formation, social life, and spiritual development. The provisional argument of this study is that the manthuq-mafhum framework, when integrated with the lafaz-hikmah relationship, constitutes a comprehensive hermeneutical principle that effectively bridges textual fidelity and contextual wisdom — enabling an understanding of the Qur'an that is simultaneously authentic, dynamic, and transformative. The novelty of this study resides in this systematic integration, which has not been previously undertaken in the existing literature.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a library research type. This approach was chosen because the focus of the research is the analysis of the concept and meaning of the Qur'an text in the study of *Ulumul Qur'an*, especially related to explicit and implicit meanings through the concept of mantuq mafhum and the relationship between lafaz and hikmah. The research data sources consist of primary data and secondary data. Primary data includes the Qur'an and *Ulumul Qur'an* books and relevant classical and contemporary commentaries. Secondary data are in the form of books and scientific journal articles discussing the interpretation of the Qur'an, explicit-implicit meanings, Islamic Education, character formation, and social and spiritual life.

The researcher acts as the main instrument in data collection and analysis. Data collection is carried out through documentation and literature searches by identifying, classifying, and selecting library sources according to the research focus. Data analysis used a descriptive analytical method with a thematic-conceptual approach, namely examining the relationship between wording and wisdom from the perspective of the explicit and implicit meaning of the Qur'an and drawing its implications for Islamic education, character

formation, social life, and spiritual life. Data validity was maintained through source triangulation by comparing the views of scholars and scholars of interpretation.

The focus of the research was directed at efforts to understand the Qur'an in a balanced and contextual manner so that it remains authentic and relevant throughout the ages. The unit of analysis in this study is the textual and conceptual content of *Ulumul Qur'an* literature pertaining to manthuq, mafhum, lafaz, and hikmah, as found in classical and contemporary scholarly works. A library research design was selected specifically because the object of inquiry is fundamentally textual and conceptual rather than empirical: the research examines scholarly constructions of ideas and their inter-relationships, for which documentary analysis of authoritative texts is the most rigorous methodology.

Primary data sources include the Qur'an itself, foundational *Ulumul Qur'an* works (Notably *Mabahith fi 'Ulum al-Qur'an by Manna' al-Qaththan*), and classical and contemporary tafsir. Secondary data comprise peer-reviewed journal articles and monographs on Qur'anic interpretation, explicit-implicit meaning, Islamic education, and character formation. Data collection was conducted through systematic documentation and structured literature review: sources were identified, thematically classified, and evaluated for scholarly authority and relevance.

Data analysis employed a descriptive-analytical method within a thematic-conceptual framework, comprising: (a) definition and typological analysis of the key categories; (b) examination of their conceptual inter-relationships (manthuq-mafhum and lafaz-hikmah); and (c) derivation of their implications across Islamic education, moral formation, social life, and spiritual development. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation, cross-referencing classical and contemporary scholarly positions to verify conceptual consistency and interpretive accuracy.

The library research design adopted in this study is consistent with established methodological frameworks in Islamic and Qur'anic studies. Sari & Asmendri, (2020) affirm that library research (Penelitian Kepustakaan) is an appropriate and rigorous methodology for studies focused on understanding and analyzing textual and conceptual content from documented scholarly sources, as it enables systematic, in-depth engagement with primary and secondary literature without the limitations of field-based data collection. Similarly, Amir et al., (2023) demonstrate that scholarly inquiry into Qur'anic sciences has historically relied on the critical review and comparative analysis of classical and contemporary texts as its primary epistemic procedure. The present study follows this methodological tradition by treating the conceptual

and textual content of *Ulumul Qur'an* literature as its unit of analysis, and by employing triangulation across classical and contemporary scholarly positions to ensure interpretive accuracy and conceptual consistency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Understanding Manthuq

Manthuq is a meaning indicated by a pronunciation in the area of its pronunciation. Rasyid & Reskiani, (2023) Either in the form of law, such as the prohibition of speaking harshly to parents as indicated by the verse;

فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٍّ

"Don't speak harshly to your parents"

The meaning of the verse, which states that it is forbidden to speak harshly to one's parents, is indicated by the pronunciation of the verse. Or it can be something other than the law, such as the meaning of a person indicated by the sentence "جاء زيد" (Zaid has come). The various types of manthuq are divided into three types: *first*, Nash, Nash is a pronunciation whose form itself can show the intended meaning. strictly speaking (Sharikh), does not contain any other meaning. (Rakhmawati & FN Anisa, 2024) For example, in the words of Allah SWT in the Al-Qur'an Surah Al-Baqarah Verse 43:

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ

And establish prayer, pay zakat and bow with those who bow. This verse explains the obligations of prayer and zakat. This argument cannot be interpreted or explained because the verse is clear and there is no difficulty in understanding the content of the law and interpreting it. *Second*, dzahir, Dzahir is a lafadh which allows two meanings, but one of the meanings is immediately understood (Rajih) when spoken and the other is weak (marjuh). So, dhahir is the same as text in terms of its designation of meaning based on sayings. However, from another aspect, this is different because the text only shows one meaning explicitly and does not contain the possibility of accepting another meaning Rasyid & Reskiani, (2023) Meanwhile, dhahir, apart from indicating one meaning when spoken, also provides the possibility of another meaning, although weak. For example, in the words of Allah in the Al-Qur'an Surah Al Baqarah Verse 222 :

وَلَا تَقْرُبُوهُنَّ حَتَّىٰ يَطْهُرْنَ

"And do not approach them until they have purified themselves ." Stopping from menstruation is called purification (Tuhr), ablution and bathing are also called "tuhr". However, the designation of the word "tuhr" to the second meaning (Bathing) is more precise, clear (Zahir) so that is the strong meaning (strong), while the designation to the first meaning (Stopping Menstruation) is marjuh (Weak). *The third* is Muawwal, Muawwal is Lafad which is interpreted as ma'na marjuh because there are arguments that prevent its meaning from ma'na rajih. Muawwal is different from dzahir, dzahir is interpreted as ma'na rajih because there is no evidence that turns him away from ma'na rajih, while muawwal is interpreted as ma'na marjuh because there is an argument that turns him away from ma'na rajih. However, each of these two ma'na is indicated by pronunciation according to the sound of the utterance. For example, in the word of Allah in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Baqarah Verse Al-Isra' verse 24:

وَاخْفِضْهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيْنِي صَغِيرًا

"And bow to both the wings of your humility (As a form of) love." The word "janah adz-dzuli" means submission, tawaddu' and getting along well with one's parents, it does not mean "wings", because it is impossible for humans to have wings.

These three types of manthuq — nash, dzahir, and mu'awwal — are not merely taxonomic categories but represent a graduated spectrum of textual clarity. From a hermeneutical standpoint, this typology directly informs Islamic legal reasoning: nash provides the unambiguous normative basis for religious obligations, dzahir enables jurists to apply the strongest probable meaning while acknowledging interpretive flexibility, and mu'awwal invites metaphorical understanding where literal application is contextually impossible. Together, these distinctions constitute the foundation of authentic, text-anchored interpretation in Islamic scholarship.

The hermeneutical significance of the manthuq typology is further illuminated when situated within broader Qur'anic interpretive traditions. Supena, (2024) argues that a complete epistemology of Qur'anic interpretation requires the integration of the linguistic (Intra-Textual) approach — which corresponds closely to the explicit reading of manthuq — with extra-linguistic and interdisciplinary approaches that open up the deeper dimensions of meaning. This integrative epistemology directly parallels the movement from manthuq to mafhum in classical *Ulumul Qur'an*: nash and dzahir anchor the interpretation in the linguistic text (Tafsir), while mu'awwal and mafhum invite the reader toward the deeper rational and contextual dimensions (Ta'wil).

Understanding mafhum

Understanding Etymologically, according to Ahmad Sarwat, the word "mafhum" comes from Arabic (فهم - يفهم) which means to understand. Mafhum is a noun meaning "that which is understood." Terminologically, mafhum is the meaning indicated by a word, which is not stated in the word itself. An Nury et al., (2024) For example, in the word of Allah in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Isra', verse 23:

فَلَا تَقُلْ هُمَا أَفٍ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ هُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا

"Do not say to your parents the word 'ah' and do not shout at them, and say to them a kind word. The explicit law in the verse is the prohibition of saying the harsh word 'ah' and scolding parents. From the verse, it can also be understood that there are legal provisions that are not mentioned (Implied) in the verse, namely the prohibition of hitting parents and other actions that hurt parents. As has been stated, mafhum in Usul Fiqh terminology is a meaning of a word that is taken not based on its explicit meaning. Various types of mafhum are divided into two types, namely: *first* Mafhum muwafaqah, mafhum muwafaqoh is mafhum where the laws that are not mentioned in the wording are in accordance with or in accordance with those stated in the wording (Not Contradictory).

This definition is the determination of the law from the meaning that is in line with or in accordance with the meaning of its Mantuq (Spoken). Rakhmawati & FN Anisa, (2024) For example 1: the prohibition of hitting parents and things that hurt parents, this is as contained in the word of Allah in the Qur'an, surah Al-Isra' verse 23, namely *فَلَا تَقُلْ هُمَا أَفٍ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ هُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا*. Or Mafhum muwafaqah from the meaning of the word "ah" in the verse is that it is haram to curse, insult and hit. Example 2: The word of Allah SWT in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Isra', verse 32, namely *وَلَا تَقْرُبُوا الزَّوْجَىٰٓءَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَحِشَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا*. "And do not approach adultery".

The muwafaqah understanding of this verse is that it is haram to come near to zina, including being alone with a man and a woman, dating, let alone committing zina . The muwafaqoh understanding itself is divided into two types: *first*, the awlawi understanding (Fahwal Khitab), which is when the law is more important to understand than what is said. For example, the prohibition of cursing and hitting parents is understood from the word of Allah SWT in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Isra', Verse 23. The manthuq of this verse shows the prohibition of saying "ah", therefore the prohibition of cursing and hitting is more appropriate to be taken because both are heavier.

Second, the musawi understanding (Lahnul Khitab), which is when the law is understood (The Law Of Mafhum) is the same as the law of what is said (The Law Of Manthuq). For example, the prohibition of destroying and burning the property of orphans or wasting it is the same as the prohibition of eating the property of orphans, this is based on the word of Allah SWT in the Qur'an, Surah An-Nisa', verse 10. The indication of such meaning (The prohibition of burning the property of orphans and wasting it) is called lahnul khitob because it is the same value as eating it until it is finished.

Second, Mafhum mukhalafah, Mafhum Mukhalafah is a meaning of pronunciation that is understood differently from the utterance (Manthuq), whether an affirmation or affirmation of a law. Or if the state of the meaning that is not stated is the opposite of the meaning stated in the law. Mafhum mukhalafah itself is divided into six types, including the following: *first*, Mafhum Shifat, which connects the law of something to one of its attributes, the meaning of the attribute here is the ma'nawi attribute.

As Allah SWT says in Surah Al-Hujurot verse 6: O you who believe, if a wicked person comes to you with important news, then ascertain its truth. What can be understood from the expression of the word "Fasiq" (Fasiq Person) is that a person who is not wicked does not have to have his news ascertained. This means that the news delivered by a just person must be accepted. *The second* principle of 'adad is to connect the law of something to a certain number, as Allah SWT said in the Qur'an, Surah An-Nur, verse 4:

وَالَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ فَاجْلِدُوهُمْ ثَمَانِينَ جَلْدَةً وَلَا تَقْبَلُوا لَهُمْ شَهَادَةً أَبَدًا ۗ

"And those who accuse good women (Of Adultery) and they do not bring four witnesses, then they will be beaten eighty times." The meaning of this verse is that they cannot be beaten less or more than eighty times. *third*, Mafhum ghayah, namely the lafaz which shows the law up to the ghayah (Maximum Limit). as Allah SWT says in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 30:

فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدُ حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ

"Then if the husband is divorced (After The Second Divorce), then the woman is no longer halal for him until she marries another husband." The meaning of this verse is that you are not allowed to marry a wife who has had three divorces until she marries another man. It is clear that if the ex-wife has married another man and divorced that man and the iddah period has expired, then he is allowed to remarry his ex-wife. *The fourth* Mafhum Syarth means meaning that is understood based on a condition, which if the condition is not

fulfilled, then the law is nullified. As Allah SWT says in the Al-Qur'an Surah At-Talaq verse 6:

وَإِنْ كُنَّ أُولَاتٍ حَمْلٍ فَأَنْفِقُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ

And the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful, "If they (The Divorced Wives) are pregnant, then provide for them their maintenance until they give birth." This verse explains that a wife who has been divorced by her husband is still entitled to maintenance from her husband. Provided that she is pregnant. Therefore, the understanding of the syarth of this verse is that she is not entitled to receive maintenance if she is not pregnant. *Fifth*, Mafhum al-Laqaab is to negate the application of a law related to a pronunciation to another person and determine that the law applies to certain names or designations. For example, the word of Allah in Surah Yusuf verse 4:

إِذْ قَالَ يُوسُفُ لِأَبِيهِ يَا أَبَتِ إِنِّي رَأَيْتُ أَحَدَ عَشَرَ كَوْكَبًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ رَأَيْتُهُمْ لِي سَاجِدِينَ

“(Remember), when Yusuf said to his father: O my father, indeed I saw in a dream eleven stars, the sun and the moon I saw all prostrating to me.” From this verse it can be understood that this statement is only related to the Prophet Yusuf because it has no connection with anyone else. And what has been mentioned in a hadith *في الغنم زكاة*, that there is an obligation for zakat on goats. Therefore, the underlying principle is: zakat is not obligatory on anything other than goats. However, it should be noted that this underlying principle cannot be used as evidence.

The sixth principle of hasr is to eliminate the law of what is limited (Mahshur) from what is not limited. And to establish the opposite law. As Allah says in the Qur'an, Surah al-Fatihah, verse 5: *إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ* "Only to You we worship and only to You we ask for help." The understanding is that besides Allah there is no one to be worshipped and no one is asked for help. Therefore, this verse shows that only He has the right to be worshipped and asked for help.

Arguing with Understanding

Scholars differ in their opinions about the validity of making a hujjah with a mafhum mkholafah. According to the most shohih opinion, these interpretations may be used as hujjah with several conditions: What is said is not out of common "custom". So the words "those who are in your care" in the verse "...And the daughters of your wives who are in your care..." (An-Nisa' Verse 23), have no meaning, (The meaning if taken to mean it, is still incorrect, because it will produce an understanding like this; it means stepchildren who

are not in the care of their stepfather may be married), because in general the wife's daughters are in the care of their husbands and what is mentioned is not to explain an existing reality.

The problem of making an *hujjah* to the *mafhum muwafaqoh* is lighter, because the *ulama* have agreed on the validity of making an *hujjah* with him. The conditions governing the validity of *mafhum mukhalafah* as a juristic argument reveal the epistemological precision of classical Qur'anic hermeneutics. These conditions function as methodological safeguards that prevent arbitrary expansion of implicit meanings beyond their textual boundaries. This has direct implications for contemporary Islamic discourse: by grounding *mafhum* in controlled interpretive conditions, the tradition simultaneously enables dynamic, context-sensitive understanding while safeguarding against the inflation of implications that may distort the divine message. The epistemological framework underlying the *mantuq-mafhum* distinction is further illuminated by its relationship to the broader field of Qur'anic exegesis.

The scholarly debate over the validity of *hujjah* with *mafhum mukhalafah* reflects a deeper tension between textual authority and interpretive flexibility in Islamic legal epistemology. Saeed & Akbar, (2021) observe that the tendency toward textualism in classical and modern Islamic scholarship has often led to an underappreciation of the contextual dimensions of Qur'anic meaning—dimensions that the *mafhum* framework is precisely designed to address. By preserving the anchoring function of *mantuq* while enabling principled extension through *mafhum*, the classical *ulama* developed a hermeneutical system that balanced fidelity to revelation with responsiveness to human circumstance. Khitam, (2023) extends this analysis by demonstrating that the actualization of *al-mantuq* and *al-mafhum* in contemporary *tafsir* discourse requires not only technical mastery of the typological categories but also an awareness of the *maqasidi* dimensions of the text—that is, the higher objectives of the Qur'an—so that *hujjah* is derived in a manner that is both linguistically grounded and purposively coherent with the overall aims of Islamic law and ethics.

The Relationship between Words and Wisdom in the Perspective of the Explicit and Implicit Meanings of the Qur'an

The discussion of the wording and wisdom in the Qur'an cannot be separated from the concepts of explicit and implicit meaning. These two are two complementary layers of meaning that reflect the depth of the Qur'an's message. The wording serves as a container for explicit meaning, while wisdom is present as the essence and purpose, often revealed through implicit

meaning. Explicit meaning is the meaning that can be directly understood from the wording of a verse based on Arabic language rules, sentence structure, and the context in which the verse was revealed. This meaning is objective and serves as the primary basis for establishing Islamic creeds, laws, and principles. In relation to the wording, explicit meaning is the first and fundamental meaning that must be understood before moving on to deeper interpretations. The wording of the Qur'an limits and directs the explicit meaning so that it does not deviate from the intent of revelation. Therefore, all scholars of exegesis agree that any interpretation must not contradict the explicit meaning of a verse.

Explicit meaning also serves as a methodological safeguard, as it ensures that understanding of the Qur'an remains grounded in the text and does not deviate from the corridors of sharia. Implicit meaning is a meaning that is not always written directly in the wording of a verse, but can be understood through contemplation (Tadabbur), social context, and the general purpose of the Qur'an (Maqāṣid Al-Qur'ān). This meaning is closely related to wisdom, namely the values, moral messages, and substantive goals that the Qur'an wants to realize. Wisdom often appears in the form of implicit meaning, for example the values of justice, compassion, responsibility, and spiritual awareness.

This implicit meaning is what makes the Qur'an always relevant to various situations and developments of the times. However, scholars emphasize that an acceptable implicit meaning is one that does not contradict the explicit meaning of the verse, is still in harmony with the wording and structure of the verse's language, and is in line with the general principles of the Qur'an and Islamic law. With these limitations, implicit meaning serves to broaden understanding, not replace or eliminate the explicit meaning.

Continuity between Explicit and Implicit Meaning

The explicit and implicit meanings in the Qur'an have an integrative relationship. Explicit meaning provides a solid normative foundation, while implicit meaning brings the Qur'an's message to life in ethical, spiritual, and social dimensions. Words serve as the starting point that gives birth to explicit meaning, while wisdom becomes the goal that is often reflected through implicit meaning. Both move in a line of divine messages: words → explicit meaning → wisdom → implicit meaning. With this flow, understanding the Qur'an does not stop at the text, but also does not float without a textual foothold.

Thus, words and wisdom are two elements that are intertwined with the explicit and implicit meanings in the Qur'an. Words give birth to explicit

meaning as the basis for understanding, while wisdom is reflected through implicit meaning as the goal and spirit of the divine message. Both must be understood in a balanced way so that the Qur'an truly becomes a guide that guides the human mind, heart, and behavior. This integrative relationship between explicit meaning (As established through *manthuq*) and implicit meaning (As realized through *mafhum*) is not merely a theoretical proposition; it has direct and concrete implications for how Muslims engage with the Qur'an in four key domains of life: Islamic education, character and moral formation, social life, and spiritual development. The following section examines each of these domains in turn, demonstrating how the *manthuq-mafhum* framework and the *lafaz-hikmah* relationship together generate a comprehensive and transformative approach to Qur'anic understanding.

Implications of Understanding the Explicit and Implicit Meaning of the Qur'an in Islamic Education, Formation of morals, social life and spiritual life

In Islamic education, understanding the explicit and implicit meanings of the Quran plays a vital role in shaping students who are not only intellectually intelligent but also morally and spiritually mature. The Quran explicitly emphasizes the importance of knowledge, as Allah states in Surah Al - 'Alaq, verses 1-5:

إِفْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ۝١ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ۝٢ اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ۝٣ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ۝٤ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ۝٥

This verse contains the command to read and study. Its explicit meaning emphasizes the obligation to seek knowledge as the foundation for developing Islamic education. Implicitly, the verse conveys the wisdom that education is not merely a cognitive activity, but rather a means to know God and improve the quality of humanity. Islamic education that understands this verse's implicit meaning will emphasize the development of awareness, scientific ethics, and social responsibility, not merely mastery of subject matter (H Setyarama, 2025).

This pedagogical understanding of Qur'anic verses resonates with contemporary scholarship on Islamic education. Hussien et al., (2021) demonstrate, through their empirical study of hikmah-based pedagogy, that learning environments which cultivate reflective inquiry into the wisdom dimensions of religious texts produce learners with deeper moral reasoning and stronger spiritual identity. Their findings directly validate the *manthuq-mafhum* framework as a pedagogical resource: by systematically moving students from explicit textual meaning toward the implicit wisdom of Qur'anic verses, Islamic educators can cultivate the kind of integrated intellectual-

moral formation that aligns with the holistic aims of Islamic education. Furthermore, Mubarok et al., (2023) confirm that the Qur'an's educational method is intrinsically multi-dimensional, encompassing explicit normative guidance alongside implicit wisdom-oriented teaching that must be contextually interpreted to achieve full educational impact. The manthuq-mafhum approach thus functions not merely as a hermeneutical tool but as a foundational pedagogical principle.

In forming morals, the Qur'an explicitly commands certain moral behavior, such as honesty and justice. An example is in QS. An-Nahl verse 90:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

This verse clearly commands justice and good deeds, while forbidding evil and wrongdoing. The explicit meaning of this verse serves as a normative standard for Muslim behavior. Meanwhile, the implicit meaning of this verse teaches the wisdom that noble morals are the primary foundation for social harmony and balance in human life. By understanding this implicit meaning, morals are understood not merely as formal obedience to commands, but as a moral awareness born from an understanding of the values of justice and virtue themselves.

The character-forming dimension of Qur'anic moral discourse is further illuminated by contemporary scholarship on Islamic ethics. (Al-Khatib, 2023), in his analysis of the concept of justice in Islamic thought, demonstrates that Qur'anic moral imperatives such as those expressed in verses commanding 'adl (Justice) and ihsan (Excellence) operate simultaneously at the explicit normative level and at the level of implicit wisdom, where justice is understood not merely as rule-compliance but as a comprehensive orientation toward the divine will and social good. This dual operation precisely mirrors the manthuq-mafhum dynamic: the explicit command (Manthuq) establishes a binding norm, while the implicit wisdom dimension (Mafhum) motivates internalized moral commitment that sustains ethical behavior across changing social contexts. Character formation through Qur'anic implicit meaning is therefore not a secondary educational goal but a constitutive dimension of authentic Islamic moral development.

Al-Khatib, (2023) The pedagogical implications of the manthuq-mafhum framework extend to the fundamental structure of Islamic education as a formative enterprise. Athiyah et al., (2024) analyze the goals and content of education from the perspective of the Qur'an, establishing that Islamic education is intrinsically oriented toward the comprehensive development of the human person—intellectual, moral, and spiritual. Their study confirms that the Qur'an's educational vision is embedded in its very discursive

structure: explicit commands and prohibitions (Manthuq) establish the normative framework of education, while the wisdom dimensions accessible through mafhum orient learners toward the deeper purposes that give those norms their transformative power. This finding provides strong empirical grounding for the integration of the manthuq-mafhum framework into Islamic educational curricula, not merely as a subject of linguistic study but as a pedagogical method that can structure the entire learning process around the movement from textual understanding to wisdom internalization.

In social life, the Qur'an provides explicit guidance regarding interpersonal relationships. QS. Al-Hujurat verse 10:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

This verse states that believers are brothers, and therefore they are commanded to reconcile those in conflict. The explicit meaning of this verse emphasizes the obligation to maintain brotherhood and social peace. Its implicit meaning teaches the importance of solidarity, empathy, and collective responsibility in social life. This verse teaches that social conflict should not be allowed to persist, as it contradicts the primary goal of Islam, which is to create welfare and peace. Understanding this implicit meaning is highly relevant in pluralistic and multicultural societies. In the spiritual dimension, the Qur'an explicitly emphasizes the purpose of human creation, as Allah says in the QS. Adz-Dzariyat verse 56:

The social implications of Qur'anic implicit meaning are further illuminated by the relationship between textual authority and ethical normativity in Islamic thought. Akbar & Saeed, (2022), in their analysis of contemporary Qur'anic interpretation, argue that an authentic engagement with the Qur'anic text must account for both its manifest pronouncements and the underlying ethical principles that these pronouncements are designed to serve—principles that are accessible precisely through the mafhum dimension of Qur'anic discourse. This theoretical insight is directly applicable to the social domain: when the implicit meaning of Qur'anic verses on brotherhood and social solidarity is properly understood, these teachings transcend their original historical context and become operative norms for social life in diverse contemporary settings. The manthuq-mafhum framework thus functions as a bridge between scriptural revelation and living social practice, enabling communities to draw on Qur'anic wisdom without reducing it to the literal parameters of its textual expression.

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

This verse explains that humans were created to worship Allah. The explicit meaning of this verse emphasizes the obligation of worship as the core of a Muslim's life. However, implicitly, the verse conveys the wisdom that worship is not merely an outward ritual, but rather a process of drawing closer to Allah and developing a deeper spiritual awareness.

By understanding this implicit meaning, worship is practiced with sincerity and reverence, thus resulting in peace of mind and the formation of a strong spiritual character. From these examples, it is clear that the explicit and implicit meanings of the Quran complement each other in guiding the education, morals, social life, and spirituality of Muslims. The explicit meaning maintains the clarity and authenticity of the teachings, while the implicit meaning brings the Quran's message to life, ensuring its relevance and transformation in all times and places.

The social and spiritual dimensions of Qur'anic implicit meaning thus converge in a vision of Muslim life that is simultaneously communal and inward. Al-Khatib, (2023) confirms that the Qur'an's concept of justice encompasses not only juridical and social dimensions but also a spiritual orientation in which individual piety and social responsibility are inseparably linked through the recognition of divine wisdom operative in human affairs. This aligns precisely with the *manthuq-mafhum* framework: the explicit commands that govern social conduct are undergirded by implicit meanings that transform outward compliance into genuine spiritual commitment. When this dual meaning is properly understood, social virtues such as brotherhood, reconciliation, and solidarity are practiced not as mere social obligations but as expressions of a living spiritual awareness. The integration of explicit normative guidance and implicit wisdom thus generates a vision of Islamic social life in which justice, compassion, and spiritual depth are unified into a coherent way of being in the world.

Al-Khatib, (2023) The convergence of social and spiritual dimensions in Qur'anic implicit meaning points to the foundational unity of the *manthuq-mafhum* framework as an integrative hermeneutical tool. Nugroho & Alwizar, (2024) confirm that the *kaidah mantuq dan mafhum* is not merely a classificatory scheme but an active hermeneutical instrument through which the Qur'an's guidance for human life is made systematically accessible. By distinguishing between what is explicitly stated and what is implicitly intended, this framework enables interpreters to honor the integrity of the revealed text while extending its applicability to the full range of human circumstances. This is especially significant in the contemporary context, where rapid social change and cultural pluralism demand that Islamic guidance be articulated in ways that are both faithful to the Qur'an and

responsive to the complex realities of modern life. The *manthuq-mafhūm* framework thus represents not only a classical scholarly achievement but a living hermeneutical resource for the ongoing renewal of Islamic thought and practice.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that *manṭūq* and *mafḥūm* constitute indispensable hermeneutical foundations for a comprehensive understanding of the Qur'an. *Manṭūq*, which denotes the meaning explicitly conveyed by the wording of a verse, establishes the normative basis and interpretive boundary that safeguards against arbitrary or speculative readings. *Mafḥūm*, which captures the meaning implicitly embedded in the text's context and purpose, extends understanding beyond the literal surface to the wisdom (*hikmah*) and spirit of divine revelation. The relationship between lafaz and hikmah thus operates as a methodological principle that prevents both rigid textualism and unanchored interpretation. The integration of these two dimensions produces authentic, contextual, and living Qur'anic understanding.

In Islamic education, this integration orients learning toward knowledge and character formation simultaneously. In moral life, it grounds ethical conduct in sincere inner awareness rather than mere formalism. In social life, it cultivates justice, tolerance, and civic responsibility. In spiritual life, it deepens worship through consciousness of God's presence and purpose. The novelty of this study lies in its systematic integrative framework linking the *manṭūq-mafḥūm* dichotomy with the *lafaz-hikmah* relationship as a unified hermeneutical model a contribution not previously addressed comprehensively in prior literature. Future research is recommended to operationalize this framework in Islamic educational curricula and empirical interpretive practice.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to express his gratitude to Allah SWT for His grace and guidance so that this article can be completed well. Thanks are also extended to the lecturer of the Qur'anic studies course, Dr. H. Muhammad Shohib, MA, who has provided direction, input, and motivation in the preparation of this article. In addition, the author appreciates the contributions of Muslim scholars and scholars through the works of Ulumul Qur'an and tafsir which are the main sources in this research. Appreciation is also given to all parties who have provided support, both academically and morally, so that this article can be compiled and useful for the development of Qur'anic studies and Islamic Education.

REFERENCES

- AK Khitam. (2024). The Engagement of Qur'anic Sciences: A Correlation Between al-Mantuq wa al-Mafhum and Gracia's Hermeneutics. *Ejournal.Unida.Gontor.Ac.IdAK KhitamStudia Quranika*, 2024•*ejournal.Unida.Gontor.Ac.Id*, 9(1), 73–93. <https://doi.org/10.21111/studiquran.v9i1.11677>
- Akbar, A., & Saeed, A. (2022). A Critique of the Concept of Ḥākimiyya: Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd's Approach. *Religions*, 13(11), 1100. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13111100>
- Al-Khatib, M. A. (2023). The Concept of Justice in Islam: A Socio-pragmatic Analysis. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*, 45–66. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ejecs/1749>
- Amir, S., Norasid, M. A., & Hilmi, A. B. A. (2023). Scientific Studies of the Qur'ān in the Contemporary Era: An Analysis of Concept, History, and Methodology. *Journals.Umt.Edu.PkS Amir, MA Norasid, ABA HilmiJournal of Islamic Thought and Civilization*, 2023•*journals.Umt.Edu.Pk*, 13(1), 188–202. <https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.131.13>
- An Nury, A. H., Bukhari, B., Nasution, S. P., Hasibuan, J., & Agustiar, A. (2024a). Analisis Manthuq dan Mafhum Dalam Makna Tersurat dan Tersirat. *Hamalatul Qur'an: Jurnal Ilmu Ilmu Alqur'an*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.37985/hq.v5i2.362>
- An Nury, A. H., Bukhari, B., Nasution, S. P., Hasibuan, J., & Agustiar, A. (2024b). Analisis Manthuq dan Mafhum Dalam Makna Tersurat dan Tersirat. *Hamalatul Qur'an: Jurnal Ilmu Ilmu Alqur'an*, 5(2), 613–622. <https://doi.org/10.37985/hq.v5i2.362>
- Athiyah, U., Alqur'an, A. A.-H. Q. J. I. I., & 2024, undefined. (2024). Tujuan dan materi pendidikan dalam perspektif Al-Qur'an. *Ipv6.Jogoroto.OrgU Athiyah, A AlwizarHamalatul Qur'an: Jurnal Ilmu Ilmu Alqur'an*, 2024•*ipv6.Jogoroto.Org*, 5(2), 27–40. <https://doi.org/10.37985/hq.v5i2.149>
- Faradina, S., Amelia, S. R., & Muttaqin, M. I. (2024). Studi Literatur Konsep Manthuq Dan Mafhum Dalam Al-Qur'an. *Muta'allim: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 3(3), 151–161. <https://doi.org/10.18860/mjpai.v3i3.11166>
- Faris, S. (2023). Exploring The Divine Message: Quranic Studies in The Context of Islamic Scholarship. *Dirasah International Journal of Islamic Studies*, 1(2), 111–125. <https://doi.org/10.59373/drs.v1i2.16>
- Fikria, A. A., & Zulhidah, Z. (2023). Konsep Mafhum Dan Manthuq Dalam Kajian Al-Qur'an. *Jurnal Kajian Agama Dan Dakwah*, 2(1).

- H Setyarama. (2025). Contextual Analysis of Surah Al-Anfal Verse 17: Uncovering the Substantive Meaning of War and Its Implications in Contemporary Contexts. *Journal.Unj.Ac.IdH SetyaramaJurnal Studi Al-Qur'an*, 2025•*journal.Unj.Ac.Id*, 21(2). <https://doi.org/10.21009/JSQ.21.2.05>
- Hussien, S., Abd. Wahab, Mohd. K., & Hashim, R. (2021). Improving Students' Inquiry Skills In Islamic Education Through Hikmah Pedagogy And Community Of Inquiry. *Malaysian Journal of Learning and Instruction*, 18. <https://doi.org/10.32890/mjli2021.18.2.7>
- Khitam, A. K. (2023). *Aktualisasi Konsep Al-Mantuuq Dan Al-Mafhum Perspektif Usul Fiqih Dalam Diskursus Penafsiran Al-Qur'an*.
- Mappasessu, M., & Akmal, A. M. (2025). Studying Fiqh Based on the Quran and Hadith in the Modern Era by Revisiting the Methodology of Legal Istiḥbat. *Nuris Journal of Education and Islamic Studies*, 5(2), 151–167. <https://doi.org/10.52620/jeis.v5i2.119>
- Mubarok, M. S., Ramadhani, R., & Putri, M. D. (2023). Educational Method in the Quran: Analysis of Islamic Education Science Surah An-Nahl Verse 125. *International Journal of Islamic Khazanah*, 13(1), 35–47. <https://doi.org/10.15575/ijik.v13i1.19752>
- Nugroho, A. F., & Alwizar, A. (2024). Kaedah Tafsir Mantuuq dan Mafhum. *Hamalatul Qur'an: Jurnal Ilmu Ilmu Alqur'an*, 5(2), 17–26. <https://doi.org/10.37985/hq.v5i2.148>
- Rakhmawati, A., & FN Anisa. (2024). Tobacco harvesting ceremony on Merapi mountainsides as a preservation of cultural values and Javanese inheritance: critical discourse analysis. *Taylor & FrancisA Rakhmawati, FN Anisa, MAW WardanaCogent Arts & Humanities*, 2024•*Taylor & Francis*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2024.2318654>
- Rasyid, M. D., & Reskiani, A. (2023). Mantuuq Dan Mafhum Dalam Al-Qur'an. *JIS: Journal Islamic Studies*, 1(3), 399–410. <https://doi.org/10.71456/jis.v1i3.529>
- Saeed, A., & Akbar, A. (2021). Contextualist Approaches and the Interpretation of the Qur'ān. *Religions*, 12(7), 527. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12070527>
- Sari, M., & Asmendri, A. (2020). Penelitian Kepustakaan (Library Research) dalam Penelitian Pendidikan IPA. *Natural Science*, 6(1), 41–53. <https://doi.org/10.15548/nsc.v6i1.1555>
- Supena, I. (2024). Epistemology of Tafsīr, Ta'wīl, and Hermeneutics: Towards an Integrative Approach. *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization*, 14(1), 121–136. <https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.141.08>